Dax Host-Home Program for DePaul University students who are homeless
Depaul USA, a national homeless service organization, launched the Dax Host-Home Program Spring/Summer 2015 to assist DePaul University students confronting homelessness.

The Need
Homelessness on college campuses is becoming a global phenomenon. The issue of homelessness among DePaul University students was highlighted by the DePaul University Dean of Students Office at the Fall 2014 Vincentian Family Gathering in Chicago. It was estimated that there are approximately 50 homeless students every quarter, due to a variety of reasons. The Chicago Vincentian Family created the Dax Host-Home Program with DePaul USA to respond to this need.

Some homeless students are reeling from the loss of a job or scholarship. Others leave home because of family issues such as domestic violence, abuse, addictions, divorce, gender issues, and disputes and disagreements. Whatever the reason, homelessness threatens to interrupt students' education and derail their progress towards personal goals and ambitions.

Examples of need
One student came forward because a death in the family led to damaged relationships and the loss of the only home he's ever known. Another student came forward because she wants to leave an unhealthy relationship but has no family to whom she can turn. Another student lost his two brothers in shootings, has no parents, and fears for his life in the neighborhood where he stays with his grandmother.

The Dax program objective is to create a “home” environment and complement that with mentoring and support to allow these students to continue their education and work towards self-sufficiency. The goal is to help the student reach graduation and not “fall off the radar” due to lack of money and resources. In this program the student is responsible for his or her own tuition through scholarships, loans and income.

How the Program Works
The “Host-Home” model is a best practice that provides an alternative to the shelter system. Volunteers open their homes to homeless DePaul University student for an academic term (12 weeks). Both the student and the volunteer hosts go through a screening and training process facilitated by the Dax Program Coordinator.

The program gives temporary housing and provides case management at St. Vincent Outreach Center to help students pursue their dreams and goals and to explore issues that contribute to
their homelessness. Ultimately, the student pursues employment and permanent housing. The Dax Program Coordinator also supports the students by providing counseling and by helping student’s access employment and resources such as food, school supplies, and transportation.

Different models to meet student needs are at play. The Dax program has an apartment that can accommodate up to two (2) DePaul University students. Exploration is underway for buying or rehabbing a house to accommodate multiple students with a live-in Social Work Masters Intern as coordinator.

**Description of DePaul USA and Parent Organization**

DePaul USA is a non-profit founded on St. Vincent DePaul’s values and his life’s work as well as service to those most in need. DePaul USA is closely allied to the larger Vincentian Family. The corporate office is located in DePaul University space at 55 E. Jackson Blvd, Suite 800. DePaul USA operates homeless services in Philadelphia, New Orleans, Little Rock, St. Louis and Macon, GA.

DePaul USA is a subsidiary of DePaul International which has been functioning for 27 years and has as its motto, “Homelessness Has No Place.” Begun in the U.K., DePaul International has expanded to meet the need of homeless men and women in Ireland, France, Slovakia, Ukraine, and the USA. Together these programs manage more than 80 projects, providing shelter, food, medical care and safe places for nearly 13,000 individuals each year.

In addition to service programs, DePaul International and DePaul University are co-sponsoring The Institute of Global Homelessness, a global think-tank housed in the Loop campus of DePaul University.

**Local Partners**

Locally, DePaul USA partnered with DePaul University, St. Vincent de Paul Church, the Daughters of Charity, the Congregation of the Mission, the St. Vincent DePaul Center and other members of the Vincentian Family in Chicago to create the Dax Host-Home Program.

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